

# W. Jesse Wood

*Curriculum Vitae (May 2021)*

☎ 334-329-4957  
✉ woodwil2@msu.edu  
🌐 wjessewood.com

## Education

- Ph.D. **Economics**, *Michigan State University*, expected 2022.
- M.A. **Economics**, *University of Texas, Austin*, 2016.
- B.S. **Applied Mathematics**, *Auburn University, summa cum laude*, 2015.

## Fields of Interest

Economics of Education, Applied Econometrics, Labor Economics, Public Policy

## Job Market Paper

“Student-Faculty Race Match Effect on Behavioral Outcomes”

Abstract: Teachers are in a unique position to influence students during their most formative years. Despite empirical evidence that racial congruence improves student academic success via test scores (Egalite et al., 2011; Dee, 2004), nearly half of students in the US are students of color while only one in five US teachers are people of color (NCES, 2019). In this paper, I provide evidence that diversifying the labor supply of teachers to better reflect the racial distribution of students could lead to increases in outcomes for students of color without diminishing outcomes for white students. I use administrative data spanning from 2008 to 2018 within the Los Angeles Unified School District, one of the most racially diverse school districts in the country, to measure the effect of student-teacher race matching on various student non-test score outcomes. I mitigate the concern that race matches are endogenous by including school-grade and student fixed effects into a linear regression model. This setting accounts for any potential sorting that occurs across schools with regards to the racial distribution of teachers as well as any unobserved time invariant student characteristics that may be correlated with race matching. Following Jackson (2018), I generate a behavioral index for each student and find that race matched students of color see an average increase of 0.082 standard deviations (on par with the effect size found in Jackson’s work) in this behavioral index. My findings indicate that students of color also experience increases in the disaggregated measures of GPA, effort level, and cooperation and see decreases in suspensions and absenteeism when matched with a teacher of the same race. I do not find statistically significant effects on any of these outcomes for white students. Because these non-test score outcomes lead to higher high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates, and wages (Heckman et al., 2013; Heckman et al., 2012; Jackson, 2018), such effects could lead to a tightening in the achievement and wage gap found between students of color and white students. This result can be achieved with an increase in institutional efforts to ensure teacher populations more closely reflect that of their students.

## Publications

- 2020 “Teacher Quality Gaps by Disability and Socioeconomic Status: Evidence from Los Angeles” *Educational Review*. (with Ijun Lai, Scott Imberman, Katharine Strunk, & Nathan Jones).

## Working Papers

“Student-Teacher Race Match Effect: Student Non-Cognitive Skills”

“Student-Teacher Race Match Effect: Student with Disability Identification”

“Student-Faculty Race Match Effect: Student Achievement” (with Ijun Lai).

“Are Effective Teachers for Students with Disabilities Effective Teachers for All?” (with Ijun Lai, Scott Imberman, Katharine Strunk, & Nathan Jones).

“Effects of School Openings and Inter-District Choice: Evidence from Michigan” (with Danielle Edwards-Sanderson & Joshua Cowen).

## Conference & Seminar Presentations

2020-2021 Human Capital, History, Demography, & Development (H2D2) Research Day (Poster), Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Fall Research Conference, Association for Education Finance & Policy Annual Conference (Scheduled)

2019-2020 Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Fall Research Conference, Association for Education Finance & Policy Annual Conference

2018-2019 Association for Education Finance & Policy Annual Conference

## Research Experience

2019-Present Graduate Assistant, Education Policy and Innovation Collaborative, *MSU*

2019-Present Graduate Assistant, National Center for Research on Education Access and Choice, *MSU*

2017-2020 Research Assistant, Prof. Katharine Strunk, *MSU*

2016 Student Research Assistant, Prof. Cynthia Osborne, *UT-Austin*

2015 Research Assistant, Prof. Kevin Phelps, *Auburn*

## Teaching Experience

Spring 2021 Teaching Assistant, EC201 Introduction to Microeconomics, *MSU*

Fall 2020, Teaching Assistant, EC485 Economics of Education, *MSU*

Summer

2018, 2019,

2020

Summer 2019 Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Econometrics, *American Economic Association Summer Program*

Fall 2017 Teaching Assistant, EC202 Introduction to Macroeconomics, *MSU*

Spring 2017 Teaching Assistant, EC301 Intermediate Microeconomics, *MSU*

Fall 2016 Teaching Assistant, EC302 Intermediate Macroeconomics, *MSU*

Summer 2015 Instructor, Introduction to Game Theory, *Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth*

---

## Awards, Honors, & Service

- 2017 Veterans Affairs Fellowship, *MSU*
- 2016 Department of Economics Merit Scholarship, *UT-Austin*
- 2014 Army Achievement Medal, *US Army*
- 2011 Sapper Spirit Award (AIT Top Graduate), *US Army*
- 2010-2016 Technical Engineer Specialist, *US Army*

---

## References

### **Prof. Scott Imberman (Chair)**

Department of Economics and  
College of Education  
Michigan State University  
✉ imberman@msu.edu  
☎ 517-355-4667

### **Prof. Katharine Strunk**

College of Education  
Michigan State University  
✉ kstrunk@msu.edu  
☎ 517-884-6289

### **Prof. Todd Elder**

Department of Economics  
Michigan State University  
✉ telder@msu.edu  
☎ 517-355-0353

### **Prof. Jeffrey Wooldridge**

Department of Economics  
Michigan State University  
✉ wooldri1@msu.edu  
☎ 517-353-7972